

Deterrence and Defiance Models of Terrorist Violence in Northern Ireland, 1969 to 1992

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In this paper we build on prior research to argue that criminal justice and military responses to terrorism over time may produce both a positive *deterrence curve* (i.e., reducing future incidence of prohibited behavior) but also a negative *defiance curve* (i.e., increasing future incidence of prohibited behavior). Deterrence-based models have long dominated both criminal justice and counter terrorist policies on responding to violence. They maintain that an individual's prohibited behavior can be altered by the threat and imposition of punishment. By contrast, research on defiance models applied to either criminal justice or counter terrorist policies are less common and more theoretically scattered. Nevertheless, there is substantial support for such arguments from research on counter terrorism, from criminology research on labeling, defiance and legitimacy, and from the psychological literature on social power and decision making. In this paper we identify six major British counter terrorist interventions in Northern Ireland from 1969 to 1992 and then use Cox proportional hazard models to estimate the impact of these interventions on the risk of new attacks. In general, we find the strongest support for defiance arguments. Three of the six interventions were followed by significant increases in the likelihood of subsequent attacks and a fourth intervention showed short-term decreases but longer-term increases in attack risk. We found the strongest deterrent effect for a military campaign called Operation Motorman which showed short-term increases in the risk of subsequent attacks, but longer-term declines. The results underscore the importance of considering both defiance and deterrence curves in fashioning counter terrorist policies.